

# Violence erupts in Southport after child killings

*I know I use the [Telegraph](#) rather a lot but it is the best of a no-longer-as-good-as-they-were bunch of British newspapers. The information, misinformation, management of information and obfuscation after the child murders in Southport is set out clearly.*

*I was aware of Channel3 News as the [source of some rumours](#) on Monday afternoon. As I had never heard of them and their website wasn't impressive I didn't use the name and background they proffered.*



Violent protests broke out in Southport on Tuesday night as [hundreds of demonstrators clashed](#) with police following the deadly knife attack on children attending a Taylor Swift-themed holiday club.

A mob gathered outside a mosque, hurling bricks, masonry and fireworks at officers, amid claims that police were not telling the truth about the [suspect's background](#) and his motives, with rumours swirling on social media.

The violence came after a vigil to remember the [three girls who were killed in the attack](#), identified yesterday as six-year-old Bebe King, seven-year-old Elsie Dot Stancombe and nine-year-old Alice Dasilva Aguiar, took place nearby.

There has been mounting speculation online about the identity

of the attacker and the motive behind his rampage.

Russian state media were among those falsely identifying the suspect as an asylum seeker who had arrived in the UK by boat last year and sharing claims that he was on an MI6 watch list and was known to local mental health services.

Unsubstantiated claims that the attacker shouted "Allahu Akbar" have also circulated on social media.

In a statement to the Commons, Ms Cooper said those peddling misinformation about the tragedy risked undermining the ongoing criminal investigation and were being disrespectful to the grieving families.

However, her statement did not rule out that the investigation could become a terror inquiry.

Nigel Farage, the Reform UK leader, said the heckling of the Prime Minister demonstrated how unhappy the public were with the state of law and order in the country. He said important questions about the case remained, including whether there was any truth in suggestions that the suspect was on a security services watch list and whether it was terror-related. In a video statement, Mr Farage said: "I just wonder whether the truth is being withheld from us. I don't know the answer, but I think it is a fair and legitimate question. What I do know is that something is going horribly wrong in our once beautiful country."

Merseyside Police officers are continuing to question a 17-year-old on suspicion of murder and attempted murder in connection with the attack.

It is understood that although police are not treating the attack as terror-related, it has not been ruled out. Counter-terror police are continuing to support the investigation.

Ms Cooper's statement raised the prospect that the

investigation could become a terror inquiry. She said the authorities would examine what contact the suspect had with "different agencies", which could include the security services and police, as well as mental health services.

A source said: "Terror has not been entirely ruled out at this point. We recognise that it can go in any direction. All agencies are still involved, including counter-terror police. They are not leading the investigation, and it is not being treated as a terror incident, but they are still on hand. We don't want to categorically rule anything out."

Russia Today cited claims by a website called Channel 3 Now that the suspect was an asylum seeker who had arrived in the UK by boat last year and was on an MI6 watch list. The Russian state-controlled television channel later updated its story to reflect that the claim had been retracted.

Channel 3 Now claims to be a US-based website, although its Facebook page showed that it is partly managed from Pakistan, while its YouTube channel contains dozens of Russian-language videos.

With an incorrect name of the alleged attacker being shared widely online, Merseyside Police was forced to issue a statement. A spokesman for the force said: "This name is incorrect, and we would urge people not to speculate on details of the incident while the investigation is ongoing."

*About the name; It did sound middle-eastern. Normally when you put a Muslim sounding name, any name come to that, into google as well as the person being searched for you get others of the same name, in other settings. Cricket match reports are common, court reports, historic authors, you get the idea. This particular name only turned up as repeats of the Channel3 Now/News article. Again, I felt cautious, although the background 'facts' were very plausible.*

The teenager being questioned by police cannot be named

because of his age, but was born in Cardiff in 2007. It is understood his parents came to the UK from Rwanda in 2002.

The Prime Minister's official spokesman said: "People should listen to the police – they should not do anything that is going to make the police's job harder to manage the situation, to conduct their investigations. It is unhelpful to speculate on things like the motive and the circumstances around this."